DIVISION OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Report of a Visit to the Cochituate Branch
of the
Wayland Public Library
by Alice M. Cahill, General Secretary
on July 5, 1950

The visit to the Cochituate Branch of the Wayland Library was made in response to the request of Mr. Hugh F. Colliton, a trustee, who stated that the Board would welcome suggestions for making the library more generally useful to the public. Before going on to the body of the report, I wish to state that the recommendations contained herein are not made in a spirit of criticism but rather as a basis for constructive improvement and future planning.

The Library: Physical Plant

The Cochituate Branch has a fine location in the heart of the shopping center of the town. The Children's Recreation Center directly across the street should also stimulate its use by the children, although a glance at the circulation statistics, strangely enough, disproves this theory. The library interior needs to brightened with some fresh paint, for it is not inviting in its present state. The present stereotyped arrangement of the furniture could be changed to a more informal arrangement if a low, round table with benches could replace one of the rectangular tables. This round table might be a second-hand table, perhaps a discarded dining room table with its legs shortened to make the table the 25 inches height suitable for children. Both table and benches could be painted a bright color -- cherry red or yellow, for example.

The children's section of the room needs more color. This might be obtained through covering the two upper shelves of their bookcases (which are much too high for them) with hinged cupboards covered with celutex. Thus, there would be posting surface for bright pictures as well as storage space behind for seasonal books or books in little demand. Another way to brighten the children's section would be to thumb-tack a gayly designed wallpaper to the rear wall of each shelf. One roll would easily do the entire job.

The Book Collection

Both the adult and juvenile collections are in need of a thorough weeding of obsolete books as well as of books in a worn, physical condition. At present the shelves are crowded to overflowing, so that like books can not be shelved together. For example, the so called "new" books are in four different places in the room: on a table, on the small shelves to the right of the entrance, on a display rack on the circulation desk, and in the bookcase to the right of the circulation desk. This does not seem to be necessary since a check of new acquisitions to the adult collection since the first of the year revealed that 60 books of fiction were added, and no non-fiction. It is very difficult to locate a specific title when there are so many places in the room to search for it. It is recommended that the new books be kept in one place, preferably in a bookcase to the right of the circulation desk.

The picture book collection is an especially good one, as the basic titles are well represented. I would recommend their location be changed to the low bookcases in front of the windows to the left of the entrance where overflow books are now shelved in no logical order.

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